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REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONCHOLOGY,

For 1865.

To the Curators of the Academy of Natural Sciences:

Gentlemen,—During the present year the Conchological collection has been increased by the addition of about 1400 species (4000 specimens) of which more than one half are new to us.

Among these donations, two deserve especial notice, viz.:

1st. A collection of 400 species from Mazatlan and Cape St. Lucas. These are named by Mr. Philip P. Carpenter, and the collection is extremely valuable to us, from the fact that this gentleman has devoted many years to the special study of the Mollusca of our Pacific Coast.

A small portion of this collection was purchased by the Academy, but most of the species were generously presented by Mr. Carpenter, who, in many cases, has contributed the only duplicates of rare species from his own cabinet.

2d. We have received from the Smithsonian Institution over 800 species of shells collected by Wilkes' Exploring Expedition. These shells have all been labelled by the late Mr. Hugh Cuming, after comparison with the types in his own collection. Among them are a number of types of new species described by Dr. A. A. Gould, in his "Report on the Mollusca of the Expedition."

With great satisfaction the Committee announce to you that, with a few trifling exceptions, they have during the present year completed the labelling and arrangement of the entire Conchological Collection. The task has been an arduous one; over 7000 labels have been written, and corresponding entries made in the Catalogue during the year.

In almost every instance it has been necessary to determine the species by reference to the Library of the Academy. The splendid donations of shells made by the late Dr. T. B. Wilson, were accompanied by loose numbers referring to catalogues drawn up by eminent London Conchologists; in the confusion attending the removal of our collection when the last addition was made to our building, nearly all of these numbers were so displaced as to be useless. This confusion, (certainly unavoidable, as the Academy has never possessed adequate means to ensure the proper care of its collections) is deeply to be regretted, as the Committee have been compelled to substitute their own instead of the original more authentic labels. The Academy has not recently been able to continue to supply its library with Conchological works, which has increased our difficulties.

When Dr. Wilson's collections were presented to the Academy, they contained about 400 new species. These were not published in England until several years afterwards, and if we had possessed the means to have them immediately labelled and exhibited, we would doubtless have published most of them in our Proceedings, and thus received a large portion of the renown which has attached to an European Journal among Conchologists.

The Cabinet now contains upwards of 13,000 species, and is the largest in Amentea.

Having no published Catalogue of our collection and its duplicates, a necessary basis for extensive exchanges, the Committee have effected very little in this way. There is probably no other department of the Museum possessing such numerous duplicates, so that the collection could be greatly enlarged by exchanges.

The systematic classification of the shells was, until this year, chiefly Lamarckian, but the Committee have substituted for this the more scientific arrangement of recent systematists. At present the marine shells are classified according to the system of Messrs. H. and A. Adams, with modifications; the terrestrial shells according to that of Dr. Louis Pfeiffer, and the Unionidæ and fresh water Gasteropods to those of Messrs. Lea, Binney and Tryon. The

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Committee have not been able, however, to exhibit the families and genera in their proper sequence, on account of the over-crowded condition of the cases, but this can be readily remedied at any time that we possess more space.

We also regret the want of space exceedingly, because it debars us from exhibiting those interesting geographical series, which to a naturalist are not less instructive than a collection of species; enabling us to acquire a knowledge of the limits and variations of species, as determined by climatal and other influences.

Nearly double our present space is required for the proper exhibition of the collection which we already possess, and a small appropriation to publish a catalogue, would enable us to increase largely and rapidly.

While we deem it but right that the Academy, through you, should be made acquainted with our wants, the Committee forbear to press them at this time, being well aware that other departments of the collection require the first, and immediate pecuniary aid of the Academy.

Respectfully yours,

GEORGE W. TRYON, Jr.,
For Committee on Conchology.

The election of officers for the ensuing year was held in accordance with the By-Laws, with the following result:

<i>President</i>	ISAAC HAYS, M. D.
<i>Vice-Presidents</i>	Wm. S. Vaux. John Cassin.
<i>Corresponding Secretary</i>	T. Stewardson, M. D.
<i>Recording Secretary</i>	H. C. Wood, Jr., M. D.
<i>Treasurer</i>	W. C. Henszey.
<i>Curators</i>	Joseph Leidy, M. D., Wm. S. Vaux, John Cassin, E. D. Cope.
<i>Auditors</i>	Joseph Jeanes, Aubrey H. Smith, Wm. S. Vaux.
<i>Publication Committee</i>	Robert Bridges, M. D., Wm. S. Vaux, John Cassin, Joseph Leidy, M. D., Geo. W. Tryon, Jr.